with leaders of various political parties on 8th July, 1996 to discuss issues related to conduct of the assembly Elections in J and K. During the meeting, there was a consensus that the Assembly elections in the State should be held at the earliest preferably by September, 1996. Earlier the Prime Minister, during his visit to J and K on July 6, 1996 also had discussions with representatives of political parties in the State, where also there was a similar consensus. The Government are in agreement with this view. The matter has since been taken up with the Election Commission for finalising the exact dates for the Assembly Elections.

[Translation]

Indo-Tibetan Border Police

2249. SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the total strength of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police;

(b) whether the ITBP has to discharge the duty of safeguarding the borders in the most adverse geographical conditions;

(c) whether the Government propose to arm the ITBP with the latest weapons; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) Total strength of Indo-Tibetan Border Police is 30,366.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d). ITBP Units have been armed with modern weapons including the undermentioned weapons :

7.62	SLR
7.62	IMG
7.62	MMG
7.62	Sniper Rifle Styer
9 MM	Carbine
9 MM	Pistol
AK-47	Rifle
7.62	SLR GF Rifle
51	MM Mortar
81	MM Mortar

[English]

Fertilizer Industries in Orissa

2250. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of fertilizer industries in Orissa running with the assistance of Government;

(b) the number of sick industries out of them; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to revitalise these sick industries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) There are two fertilizer plants in Central public sector in Orissa viz. (1) Talcher Plant of FCI, and (2) Rourkela Fertilizer Plant of SAIL.

(b) and (c). The Fertilizer Corporation of India Limited (FCI), which has its coal-based unit at Talcher in Orissa, has been declared as sick by Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR). The revival package for FCI, approved in principle, by the Government envisages fresh investment of Rs. 1736.20 crore, including Rs. 523 crore for front and change from coal to naphtha for Talcher unit.

With a view to minimising the requirement of budgetary support, it has been decided to reformulate the revival package from the standpoint of the Financial Institutions. The final revival package would also require approval of BIFR, which is a quasi-judicial authority. Government has been providing budgetary support to the extent possible, to sustain production at operational plants, including Talcher unit.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION

Saving-cum-relief Scheme

1. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have withdrawn their contribution of Rs. 360.00 per person per annum to the "Saving Cum relief Scheme" for fishermen in Kerala, which was in force since 1991-92; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) and (b). Instructions were issued to discontinue the Saving-cum-Relief component of the Centrally Sponsored National Welfare of Fishermen Scheme with effect from 1.4.96 as it was considered that alternative employment opportunities available to fishermen during the monsoon period are a better form of assistance that an outright grant of Rs.720 per annum, shared equally by the Central and State Governments. However the department is reconsidering this.

STATEMENT CORRECTING REPLY GIVEN TO UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2795 DATED 22.8.95 REGARDING RAILWAY BRIDGES.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : Sir, in reply to part (a) of the Unstarred

Question No.2795 asked by S/Shri Prabhu Dayal Katheria & Ram Pujan Patel in the Lok Sabha on 22.8.95 regarding Railway Bridges, it was informed:

(a) 483. State-wise information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

It is regretted that the information given was not correct as Railways construct bridges of following types :-

(a) Road over/Road under bridges constructed for passing road traffic.

(b) Railway bridges provided on new lines/ doublings and additional sidings.

(c) Railway bridges constructed on replacement account either due to gauge conversion or on condition basis.

It is presumed that the question is meant for construction of Road over bridge. Statistical data/ inventory of bridges is maintained by Zonal Railways. Certain Zonal Railways while furnishing the reply included Railway's own bridges i.e. other than Road over/under bridges. However, now while compiling State-wise position of Road over/under bridges constructed during 92-93 to 94-95, it is seen that total number of bridges (Road over/under bridges) constructed are 48 instead of 483.

The correct reply should have been as under :-

(a) 48. State-wise information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Reasons for delay :

The information was to be collected from different Zonal Railways. The Zonal Railways do not keep such data State-wise. Instead Zonal-wise data is maintained. The total number of bridges on Railways was given and an assurance was also given to furnish data State-wise. Collection of data State-wise took time.

While compiling the data State-wise, it is noticed that the figure already furnished includes some bridges other than Road over/Road under bridges. Scrutiny of figures and setting right the number took some time as back references to the Zonal Railways had to be made which took time causing delay in furnishing the correcting statement.

The mistake thus occurred has been circumstantial and committed inadvertantly. All efforts will be made to avoid such occurance in furure.

18.01 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at one minute past Eighteen of the clock

(Mr. Speaker *in the Chair*)

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

The detailed Demands for Grants of Ministry of Defence for the year 1996-97 and the Defence Services estimates for the year 1996-97

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV) : Mr. Speaker, Sir I beg to lay on the Table:

(1) A copy of the detailed Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Defence for the year 1996-97. (Hindi and English Versions)

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-197/96]

(2) A copy of the Defence Services Estimates for the year 1996-97 (Hindi and English Versions)

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-198/96]

[English]

The detailed Demands for Grants (Vol.I) of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Detailed Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Home Affairs (U.T. without Legislature) for the year 1996-97

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA) : I beg to lay -

(1) A copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Vol.1) (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Home Affairs for the year 1996-97.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-199/96]

(2) A copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Vol.II) (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Home Affairs (Unions Territories without Legislature) for the year 1996-97.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-200/96]

The Detailed Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Commerce for the year 1996-97

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D KHALAP) : On behalf of Shri Bolla Bulli Ramaiah, I beg to lay a copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Commerce for the year 1996-97.

[Placed in Library See No. LT-201/96]

The Detailed Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Environment and Forests for the year 1996-97.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : I beg to lay a copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Environment and Forests for the year 1996-97.

[Placed in Library See No. LT-204/96]